

Habilitation Transfer from the Department of Rehabilitation to the Department of Developmental Services Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Regional Center

- **What is a regional center?**
 - WIC Section 4620. (a) A regional center is an agency that provides a fixed point of contact in the community for persons with developmental disabilities and their families, to the end that these persons may have access to the services and supports best suited to them throughout their lifetime.
- **What is a developmental disability?**
 - WIC Section 4512. (a) "Developmental disability" means a disability that originates before an individual attains age 18 years, continues, or can be expected to continue, indefinitely, and constitutes a substantial disability for that individual. As defined by the Director of Developmental Services, in consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction, this term shall include mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. This term shall also include disabling conditions found to be closely related to mental retardation or to require treatment similar to that required for individuals with mental retardation, but shall not include other handicapping conditions that are solely physical in nature.
- **Who is eligible for regional center services**
 - WIC Section 4512. (d) "Consumer" means a person who has a disability that meets the definition of developmental disability set forth in subdivision (a).
- **How much do consumers/families pay for services?**
 - There is no charge for diagnosis and assessment for eligibility. Once eligibility is determined, most services are free; a few services have co-pays based on the consumer/family income.
- **What responsibilities will the regional center have for vendoring Habilitation programs?**
 - Regional centers will:
 - Verify vendor is appropriately accredited with Rehabilitation Accreditation Commission (CARF) or certified with the Department of Rehabilitation.
 - Offer technical assistance and consultation to ensure vendor follows procedures and meets standards.
 - Grandfather existing vendors.
 - Complete the vendorization process for new vendors.

- **What services do regional centers provide or coordinate?**
 - WIC Section 4512. (b) "Services and supports for persons with developmental disabilities" means specialized services and supports or special adaptations of generic services and supports directed toward the alleviation of a developmental disability or toward the social, personal, physical, or economic habilitation or rehabilitation of an individual with a developmental disability, or toward the achievement and maintenance of independent, productive, normal lives.
 - Information and referral
 - Assessment, diagnosis and treatment
 - Service coordination
 - Advocacy
 - Adult Day Programs
 - Transportation
 - Early intervention
 - Counseling and health services
 - Crisis and behavioral intervention
 - Support groups
 - Personal and Residential care and living arrangements
 - Training and education
 - Other services listed in the Lanterman Act

- **What will be the process for approving new enclaves (Supported Employment Program groups)?**
 - DDS will approve new Supported Employment Program groups in consultation with the vendoring regional center.

- **What responsibilities will regional centers have for Habilitation services?**
 - Funds habilitation services in Work Activity Programs and Supported Employment Program.
 - Funds intensive (vocational rehabilitation) services only when the Department of Rehabilitation is under an "Order of Selection" and it impacts regional center consumers.
 - Provides information to regional center consumers and, as appropriate, to any consumer/family members or authorized representative, to enhance general understanding of Habilitation services.
 - Reviews IHSP.
 - Monitors service providers.

- **Who will monitor Habilitation Services?**
 - DDS will analyze data to determine regulatory compliance.
 - Regional centers will monitor Habilitation services for quality and regulatory compliance.

- **Is a program or service design required?**
 - DDS, at the request of stakeholders, re-considered the need for program or service designs, and will now make this a requirement in the habilitation regulations, which will be effective 7/1/04.
 - Existing vendors will have one year from the time of transfer to submit an approved program design to the vendoring regional center.
 - New vendors, effective 7/1/04, are required to submit a program design to be vendored.
 - The DS 1970 forms were designed to capture a profile of the services provided by habilitation vendors, and will be completed by existing vendors during the transition of habilitation services to regional centers.
 - Existing vendors are required to submit the DS 1970 no later than 7/31/04.

- **Will cross training be needed for regional center service coordination staff and habilitation program staff?**
 - The Department of Developmental Services provided habilitation training to the regional centers in March and April 2004. The training included information, which regional centers will need to provide its vendors. Subsequent trainings will be provided to habilitation vendors by regional centers. This training plan was endorsed by ARCA. DDS will be available to provide technical assistance on habilitation services, including habilitation vendor training.

- **Who will approve the IHC after 7/1/04?**
 - The IHC is being replaced with two versions of the Individual Habilitation Services Plan (IHSP) DS 1961, one for SEPs and one for WAPs. To assure quality, Regional Centers and/or the Department of Developmental Services shall review IHSP's. No single entity will approve the IHSP.

- **Will regional centers need training to better understand the WAP and SEP.**
 - In the spring of 2004, regional centers received training that focused on the "nuts and bolts" of transferring and administering WAP and SEP services.
 - In the fall of 2004, DDS will provide a comprehensive training on habilitation services, which will include among other training topics, background, history, philosophy, and intent of providing WAP and SEP services.

- **Do Regional Centers need to assign a centralized person to coordinate groups? Also, who will be the "point" people for Department of Rehabilitation?**
 - Regional centers, DDS and DOR have all assigned one or more individuals to coordinate group approvals or changes and other aspects of the Habilitation program.
 - DDS compiled an interagency contact list for regional center, DDS, and DOR that is posted on the DDS website. This list specifies the initial contact person for each agency.

- **Regional Centers need to have closer working relationship with Department of Rehabilitation.**
 - Yes, now is a good time to establish relationships with your local Department of Rehabilitation, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, and CRD staff.
 - The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors will continue to receive referrals for vocational rehabilitation services.
 - The CRD staff will continue providing certification (pending CARF accreditation) to VR programs.
 - The DOR central office will continue to process the invoices for VR SEP group services.
 - Each DOR district office will process the invoices for the VR SEP placement and individual services.

- **Can meetings be arranged for discussion of specific day-to-day issues that are not covered in regulations?**
 - Regional centers may request meetings with DDS to discuss the day-to-day operations of the program.
 - DDS will host a weekly regional center teleconference call to provide a forum for additional questions, providing feedback or seeking clarification.

- **How do we set up the authorizations and bill for group services?**
 - Generally, purchase of service authorizations will be put into legacy system (CADDIS once rolled over) by the regional centers similar to all purchased services. Initially, each regional center will receive from DDS, prior to 7/1/04, a list of consumers participating in habilitation services. An initial list was disseminated to each regional center that will be followed by a new corrected list in April 2004. A final up-dated consumer list will be distributed prior to the transfer. The regional center shall verify the consumer's participation and put a purchase into the system. Three distinct service codes will be used:
 - WAP-954;
 - SEP-Group Services Job Coaching-950;
 - SEP Individual Placement Job Coaching-952.

- **What will the process be for individual placements? This needs to be approved quickly when the need arises.**
 - The Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will approve all individual and group placements and authorize intensive services just as they do today. This will be done by the regional center if DOR is under an Order of Selection that affects regional center consumers.
 - DOR notifies the regional center of the anticipated date of transfer to Habilitation Services. Planning to authorize the extended services on this transfer date shall occur during the IPP planning meeting. At a minimum, notification from VR to regional center to begin habilitation services will be provided 15 calendar days prior to the date habilitation services begin. Regional center purchase of service for extended services will begin on the first day of the month.

- **How will uniform holiday schedules be implemented among the different regional centers?**
 - The uniform holiday schedules do not apply to supported employment services since the consumer's employer determines a consumer's job schedule. DDS sets the annual number of billable days for WAPs. Each regional center publishes their holiday schedule prior to the calendar year. Checking for and making transportation arrangements early will help prevent problems.
- **Should Regional Center's substitute CARF for local QA evaluations?**
 - Both CARF Accreditation and existing Title 17 QA evaluations are required for habilitation service providers. Each regional center is responsible to develop and implement a plan to meet these requirements.
- **Is there a way Regional Centers can increase efficiency by accepting CARF for Adult Day Programs? (For a program that does Habilitation Services as well?)**
 - CARF accreditation is specific to the services provided. If a provider is accredited both in Habilitation services and a category applicable to the provider's day program the regional center is responsible to develop and implement a plan to meet the QA requirements. Statutory authority does not exist for requiring Adult Day Programs to be accredited.
- **How can regional Centers better understand VR and VR-WAP?**
 - By working closely with DOR and DDS, regional centers will obtain information about VR and VR-WAP services. In addition, DDS will provide additional information in the fall 2004 training.
- **Will regional centers and/or service providers need training on Special Incident Reporting (SIR)?**
 - The Special Incident Reporting will not be different than what is currently required in Title 17. Regional Centers are responsible to train habilitation service providers, including the few (approximately 30 statewide) that do not have an existing regional center relationship or knowledge of the Title 17 requirements, including SIR reporting.
- **Why would the regional center refer a consumer to vocational rehabilitation services versus habilitation services?**
 - If integrated employment is the goal
 - The placement and intensive services are provided by VR.

New Questions Added May 20, 2004

- **RC - Will RCs have anything to do with ESAs and job explanations?**

- (Situational Assessments) These services are funded only by DOR through the Vocational Rehabilitation services program. Regional centers may request a copy of the assessment report.
- **How will regional centers write the purchase of service authorization with the correct number of job coaching hours for an individual consumer in a SEP/Group placement?**
 - Regional centers will write “zero” authorizations for consumers in a SEP/GRP placement. The number of job coaching hours for an individual in SEP/GROUP shall be specified in the consumer’s Individual Program Plan.
- **How will the regional center write the quantity of services an individual’s IPP, who is participating in a SEP/Group placement?**
 - The number of hours to authorize for a consumer in SEP/Group can be calculated by the number of monthly hours worked by the group divided by the number of consumers in the group.
- **How do you write a zero authorization identifying a finding source?**
 - Zero authorizations are POS authorizations linked to a contract authorization. They are called “zero” authorizations because they do not specify a quantity of services or rate. Service quantity or rates should be specified in the consumer’s Individual Program Plan.
- **When we return to do the training in our area, when will we know who our CPS II is? Wouldn’t it be best to do training with DOR SE VR/WAP specialist/regional center staff and our CPS II so we are all together learning at the same time? We were told to try to have the training by May 1; how realistic is this timeline?**
 - DDS will post the names of the CPS II staff after obtaining the required freeze exemptions to hire. Participation of DOR staff, both the SVRC and Habilitation Specialists is encouraged. Each regional center should establish a training timeline they will be able to implement.
- **What are the specific responsibilities of the CPS II assigned to the RC?**
 - These responsibilities will include, but not be limited to, approving supported employment groups and changes to existing groups; monitoring SEP group size; monitoring WAPS 50% paid work requirement; providing technical assistance to service providers and regional centers on the SEP group billing form (DS1964); monitoring, in conjunction with regional centers, habilitation service quality; act as the liaison between regional centers and DOR to: 1) assist in resolving issues in the coordination of VR-services; 2) be the point of contact for requesting consultation for regional centers from DOR’s Community Resource Development (CRD)-services (i.e. certification, wage, labor, productivity analysis, time-studies).

- **Will the Regional Centers be responsible to transport consumers to habilitation work sites?**
 - Regional centers are responsible for assisting consumers to access their community. This includes assistance with accessing available transportation when possible, then developing transportation services as needed. This service will not change with the Habilitation Transfer.

- **How will regional centers know the number of hours to put on a Purchase of Service order?**
 - For SEP IP it will be the stabilization rate, for WAP it will be maximum days per month or year, for SEP GP no hours are specified since it will be funded under a contract authorization.

- **Are all RC consumers Most Severely Disabled (MSD)? What about those who are gainfully employed?**
 - All regional center consumers referred to DOR Vocational Rehabilitation Services should be MSD (most severely disabled) this is a Federal requirement to be eligible for supported employment. Any consumer who is not MSD is not appropriate for the supported employment program, although similar intensive services may be available. They are also more likely to be impacted by DOR's order of selection requirements.